

The Middle

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Summary: There was a question he'd been meaning to ask.  
Hiccstrid.

The Middle

**\*\*Gosh darn, I'm back to where it all began, aren't I?\***

**\*\*The OTP that started it all.\*\***

**\*\*Anyway, this is set somewhere between the first and second movie, so they're both 18. Have fun! \*\***

**\*\*Disclaimer: I unfortunately don't own any part of the How To Train Your Dragon franchise. Though I'd love to work on it one day.\*\***

**\* \* \***

><p>"It'll be fun!"<p>

They were somewhere, on another island-a new one this time. It was the first one they'd really found on purpose, and the first one they'd named themselves.

Maybe it was the sunset, looking mighty close to their first one-the one where Toothless had almost dropped her with speed alone, then calmed down when the sky drooped and turned into fire and violet and gold.

Maybe it was her hair; she'd braided it a little differently since it got longer, letting it hang off her left shoulder. There was even a short, loose strand that she had said (off-handedly) she would braid, too. Hiccup didn't really care then, as long as only the outside changed. By Odin, if he were blind when they'd met, he would've loved her anyway.

Maybe it was that he'd never asked, really, and the air was ambrosia, and he was with the love of his life (which she... didn't exactly... ahem... know, yet), and it was peaceful and perfect. And he was Hiccup-effortlessly great at being curious.

So he asked.

"Why?"

Astrid shrugged. "I don't know, it alway\_\_s is. Maybe we'll find a new species-you'd like that."

He wasn't really talking about exploring, and she must have been too caught up in the excitement of it all to notice his tone of voice. So he repeated himself, tenderly looking at her (she had her back turned). Must be something about turning 18 that makes you curious with the world.

"I, uh," Hiccup said, gulping. Older? Sure. Taller? No problem. More confident? Definitely. Unless he was talking to Astrid. Which he was. "I-I meant, why me."

She blinked. "Why... you? What?"

"Oh, you know!" he replied, suddenly fired up for no reason. "Why did you pick me? Or-I mean, that is, why did you-" "Trust you? Kiss you? Fall for you?" she asked in succession matter-of-factly, with the slightest hint of sass.

Sometime in the past three years, she'd outgrown the whole "Feelings are for the weak!" notion completely, not even bothering to look shy when talking about how she felt. (Technically, this was always the case when she was alone with the chief's son, but it had transcended so much so that even Snotlout had stopped harassing her for a date or a kiss-there's no winning over a woman already in love, and he knew it.)

"Oh, I don't know, Hiccup, I didn't really have a choice on the first one, and I told you why I kissed you, and for the last-" She tapped her chin for a good while, not really sure what to say next. Why did she... Hmm. \_

She straightened herself, placing her hands on her hips. "Well, Hiccup, you're in luck. I have no idea why I fell in love with you."

Hiccup furrowed his brows. "How does that make me lucky?"

"Odin's beard... You get to help me figure it out, duh!" she replied with a smile.

"Uh. O-Okay. How?"

"Dunno. You could ask me questions and we could go from there?"

The brunet groaned on the inside-next time, he wouldn't ask. Now he's stuck in a game that could end with Astrid realizing she never really loved him to begin with.

Idiot.

"Okay. Do you love me because I'm the chief's son?" he asked jokingly. Er, semi-jokingly.

"\_Hiccup\_. If I did, I would've liked you a lot earlier, don't you think?" she sassed back. "A real question next, please."

"...Because it was a romantic flight?"

Astrid frowned. "You're going to stop asking about that day, because you know the answers. I didn't fall for you in a day, Hiccup."

He feigned hurt. "Really? That's a shame."

She stuck her tongue out at him.

He shrugged. "Fine. At Snoggletog, then?"

"Earlier? Maybe?"

"At least give me a timeline here, Astrid."

She thought for a bit. There was no moment that stood out brighter than the rest-nothing between all their jokes and serious talks, or their training days and relaxed dates. Not the fall of the Red Death, not when he was put in charge of the academy, and not when he decided to go out and map the rest of the world. Three years' worth of adventures and nothing stood out to her.

But then she realized the times with Hiccup were the only ones under the spotlight.

"I don't have one," Astrid said finally.

The boy's shoulders sagged. This was it-this is what he was dreading all along. He was going to die heartbroken because he just had to ask\_. Smart move.

"That's oka-"

"Hiccup, I don't have one."

"Yes, I heard you the first time. Don't need to rub it i-" "

You idiot," she said pulling his face towards hers. "I don't have one because it's every minute of every day that I spend with you. Stupid."

In all her years of life, she had never seen that boy grin as he did then.

Maybe it was that he was growing up. His jaw was stronger, sharper. Old baby fat still on his cheeks and chin, one last reminder that he was a babe once. He looked goofy and confused and happy all at once. Though it was his mind that made her truly happy-his thoughtfulness and encouragement and hope. Appearances changed. His heart, who he /was/ in the deepest sense of the term, wouldn't.

Maybe it was the moonlight. The air was cold-a nice, comfortable

cold. The moon was full and reflected over everything in sight. The trees, the river, and them. It reminded her of her first landing in the cove. And their first kiss.

Maybe it was just that she knew why he had asked what he did-because he loved her more than anything, arguably, because, well, Toothless existed-and silently wanted to thank him for it. The sap had been mulling over that information for years, and it really was partly her fault for taking so long to openly confirm it.

Then again, all he had to do was ask. Odin knows Hoffersons were known for being straightforward in all matters. And Astrid was an /incredibly proud/ Hofferson.

So she leaned in and he met her halfway, and that was that.

End  
file.